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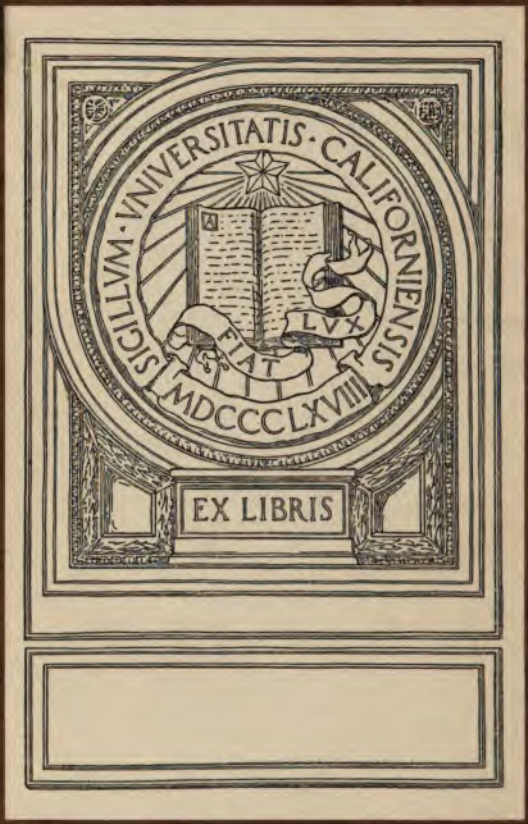
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McCLELLAN:

WHO HE IS

AND

WHAT HE HAS DONE.

By GEORGE WILKES.

New York:
PUBLISHED AT 201 WILLIAM STREET.
SINCLAIR TOUSEY, WHOLESALE AGENT, 121 NASSAU STREET.
1862.

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PREFACE.

The following article appeared on the 4th August, in WILKES' SPIRIT OF THE TIMES, and was the fifth of a weekly series, which Mr. Wilkes had previously published, to the same effect. It is rather remarkable, that the first of this series, which appeared on the 7th July, was followed in four days by the supersedure of McClellan as Commander-in-Chief of the Armies; and that a few days subsequent to the publication of the article we now reprint, General Halleck peremptorily ordered the Army of the Chickahominy out of the Peninsula. It had been said by Mr. Wilkes, as early as July 14th, that "McClellan could never reach Richmond from his perplexed position on the James, except as a captive; and that unless some leader, abler than himself, should extricate his stranded forces and restore them to the true base of operations, nothing but the providence of God could save him from capitulation." The Army of the Chickahominy is now back to where it started from five months ago, but it is reduced of its numbers by one-half, and ready to co-operate with Pope, along the line which McClellan should never have abandoned. Further comment on the judgment and remarks of Mr. Wilkes is quite unnecessary.

We have only to add, in explanation of the following article, that just previous to its appearance, General McClellan had sent on Brigadiers Sickles and Meagher to New York to raise recruits, and that while General Meagher, in alluding to McClellan, was satisfied simply with glorifying him as a miraculous genius, General Sickles denounced all adverse criticism of his idol, as springing from "ignorance or traiterous motives."

THE PUBLISHERS.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

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McCLELLAN—INSIDE AND OUT.

"Mene, mene, tekel upharsin."

New York, August 4, 1862,
Office of Wilkes' Spirit of the Times.

The strategy of the dazzling military genius who led his troops into the marshes of the Chickahominy, only to run them out so fast that he left his moaning wounded and his dead behind, has taken a new direction. Not having driven the enemy "to the wall" or conquered Richmond, as he promised, he now meditates a march against New York, and has sent us a brace of oratorical brigadiers, to straighten public sentiment, and teach us how to estimate true glory. We were not aware he was so hard pushed by criticism; but we have no doubt that he will be just as successful in this last effort, as he was in his superb operations on the James.

The Commissioners he sends us are among the profoundest soldiers of the age, and having had the full experience of a year in arms, are thoroughly qualified, not only to declare the degrees of warlike merit, but chartered to denounce all adverse question of their Young Napoleon, as proceeding "either from ignorance or traitorous motives." It is, perhaps, not a matter of much significance, that these veteran disciples of Marlborough and Vauban, depend upon the countenance of Young Napoleon for their promotion; or, perhaps of moment, that General Sickles, to whom we especially refer, is alleged to have charge of the hard task of steering him through his troubles; for these offsets to their credit, are entirely eclipsed, and the defence of Napoleon made perfect, by the shrewd and powerful proofs presented in his behalf in such convincing terms as "noble leader"—"gallant, indomitable and unconquerable chieftain," and "glorious Little Mac!"

There is a saying, however, that even the best actors on the stage are the very worst judges of the play; and on the strength of that great truth we will, while granting the sincerity of these gentlemen, take the liberty of again looking behind the curtain, and of making a diagnosis of the principal performer.

To begin, then, at the beginning,—for even the prologue of a mighty tragedy is of moment,—we will glance at one or two of our hero's antecedents which bear upon the action.

George B. McClellan was born in a Free State, and after receiving his education at West Point, embarked upon the world with a lieutenantcy. He, for a long time preferred to take up his residence in the South, and soon became conspicuously known as the personal friend of Beauregard, and a man of very strong Southern proclivities and feelings.

At an early period, we find McClellan deeply identified with Southern filibustering schemes, and finally trace him to a prominent command in the Lone Star Association. The objects of that organization were notoriously, the expansion and perpetuation of American slavery, by the forcible conquest of Cuba and its annexation to the South; and it is plain that McClellan, from his intimate intercourse with the leaders of the movement, was fully versed in all the secret aims of the conspiracy. The Philadelphia *Daily*

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News, of July 28, thus briefly states the leading features of the movement:

"General Quitman, of Mississippi, was chosen Generallissimo. The five officers next in rank to him were also to be Americans, and officers of the regular army. To General Quitman was confided the delicate duty, not of selecting, but of purchasing, the swords and hearts of these.

"He was a man of address. The offer was liberal, the terms being a cash payment of $10,000, with Cuban contingencies to each, and he succeeded in completing contracts with Albert Sidney Johnson, Gustavus W. Smith, Mansfield Lovell, J. K. Duncan and George B. McClellan.

"Smith and Lovell received their money, resigned from the army, and entered upon their new duties. But before the final arrangements were consummated with our future General-in-Chief, Marcy, then Secretary of State, in violation of the plighted faith of President Pierce (who was himself a filibuster) directed the Collector of the Port of Mobile to seize and detain the two vessels laden with arms and munitions of war, then lying in that port. His subsequent acts prevented the expedition. The question of Lieutenant McClellan's resignation was held in abeyance some days, when the inducements to it were necessarily withdrawn."

The editor of the *News* might also have stated, in this connection, that previous to these nefarious "Lone Star" movements, McClellan had been stealthily despatched to Cuba by Jefferson Davis, then Secretary of War, on a mission of military observation, as the secret service records of the Government undoubtedly will show.

The failure of the Lone Star Expedition left our young hero without any definite prospects, but his good fortune kept Jefferson Davis at the head of the War Department, and that excellent man, having always regarded McClellan with exceeding favor, and wishing to reward him, probably, for his sympathies with the South, promoted him to be a captain of infantry, and then raised him to the dazzling station of Chief of the Commission of Observation which represented the army of the United States before Sebastopol. True to these *souvenirs*, and the tendencies which they created, he, after his return, united himself with the Breckenridge Democracy, the plot of which, on the part, at least, of its Southern engineers, was to either throw the election to the "House," or, by the return of Lincoln to the Presidency, to seize the opportunity for revolution.

Now, these antecedents, though they do not affect with absolute suspicion, the firmness of McClellan's loyalty, furnish us the cue to a problem which for a long time bewildered us in the extreme; and we can now understand the secret of that wondrous approbation with which the high appointment of the young Captain was received by Southern generals and Dixie journals. The veil was lifted, too, from what had puzzled us the most, and that was, the miraculous unanimity with which every man of secession principles and doubtful loyalty among us, agreed upon his transcendent talents as a chieftain. Loyal citizens would occasionally differ on his merits; but if a man ever so lightly tinged with "Southern rights" would come in hearing, the peace patriot would be sure to fly into a rage, look threateningly at the critic, as if he more than suspected him to be an abolitionist, and swear that everybody was in a conspiracy to ruin poor Little Mac! It is true that hundreds of loyal, well-meaning men honestly did the same thing; but while there were some among them who did not, the secessionists adored and lauded him without exception. Throughout the South the same phenomenon was visible, and we would continually hear the Con-

federate journals saying, that the Yankees had but one great general, and the abolitionists were trying to ruin *him!*

The distinguished object of such singular laudation, could hardly be insensible to its effects. Human nature is governed by a few simple laws. We love those who love us, and it is repugnant to all good feeling, to injure and despitefully use, those who speak well of us. By the very excellence of his nature, therefore, McClellan was emasculated of a great portion of that vigor and devil which is the first requirement of a fighting general, and he must have painfully felt, in his moments of self-examination, that it was his misfortune to be so universally appreciated. There was one course, however, that was still open to him, and which would obviate the stern necessity of shooting off "our Southern brethren's" heads, and arms, and legs. A course, too, which, in the end, might be acquiesced in by Jeff Davis himself, and give no unappeasable offence, even to Beauregard, or his *confreres* of the Lone-Star Expedition.

This was a great country; it had great institutions and great oceans on either side of it. The American eagle ought to flap his wings over the entire continent for the benefit of millions yet unborn. It was a shame for "*brothers*" to be fighting in this way about trifling points of difference, and the thing must be "fixed up." He (McClellan) was just the man to do it. In the South, he was Hannibal; in the North, Cæsar and Napoleon together; and he might, therefore, under the scope of his great place, so manage his campaign, as to drive the enemy into a convention, instead of into battle *à l'outrance*. He was backed by the resources of a great country; he felt that he could demonstrate his superiority to his confederate rivals as a soldier, to the same extent he had outstripped them as a student in the Academy, and, when at last, by bloodless strategy he should have them cornered, he would signify to them they had better lay down their arms, be good and loyal citizens again, and he would arrange matters so that everything "would be lovely," and they would have all their "rights."

We do not positively assume this theory in his favor, but it is entirely consistent with his known loyalty; and to say the truth, it is the best we have. And if perchance we are correct, we can almost imagine the broad and humane expression which spread over his benevolent countenance as this superb idea irradiated and relieved the previously agitated depths of his philosophic mind. In the dim vista of the future, he might behold himself toga'd on a pedestal, crowned with the olive as well as with the laurel, and continually alluded to by poetic orators as the second "Father of his Country."

We find much to harmonize with this idea. His *debut* was made with the announcement that we would carry on the war with as little loss of life as possible, and we have seen that, though the enemy, in vastly inferior numbers, kept thrusting the rebel flag under his nose at Fairfax Court House; nay, at Munson's Hill for several months, he would not give our "Southern brethren" battle. They even blockaded the Potomac on him; nay, with one-third his numbers they reduced him to a state of siege, and made daring raids upon his lines from day to day; but the hour had not come to strike the crushing blow (perhaps to needlessly exasperate the feelings on both sides), and he bore the taunts and humiliations of his position with wondrous fortitude. What probably was the most embarrassing part of his position, was the restless chafing of the 200,000 bayonets at his back, for an advance; and the only consolation that could possibly have supported him in this trying situation was the consciousness that his motives were correct, and that his plan would bring the country out all right in the end.

He was rather unlucky though, for the war was terribly exasperated in the West by Halleck, Foote, Grant, Pope, Mitchell, Wallace, Curtis and Sigel; and in the South-West by that rare old Governor Ben Butler, Farragut and Porter; and in the South-East by Burnside, Sherman and Dupont. The East, where we had the most troops and the *greatest general*, was the place where nothing was done at all.

It was something to our Young Napoleon, nevertheless, that the People kept gazing upon him in a sort of admiring trance, and, though they could not by any means penetrate his plans, they hurrahed for his amazing silence and inaction, and offered to "bet their lives (as fifty thousand did, and lost them) that Little Mac wasn't keeping so still for nothing, and that by-and-by he would come out all right."

At length, Little Mac did move; and on his own judgment he chose the route to Richmond, by the way of the Peninsula. It was not a very direct road, for it obliged him to embark and debark a vast army, and make a long trip by sea—a process that is always somewhat demoralizing to troops, and always very filthy. The cost of the job was worth, in cash, probably some fifty millions—a sum for which he could have built ten railways, and defended them as they went, from Washington to within ten miles of Richmond.

The choice of route was therefore thought to be a little singular, and some querulous civilians likewise thought it strange, that having so long refused the opportunity to strike the enemy at Manassas, with quadrupled numbers in his favor, he should take a roundabout road, for so great a distance, to receive odds against himself. This, however, was regarded as impertinent, and the Young Napoleon went his way, backed by the hopes and confidence of the whole nation. He took 120,000 men with him, which was all he asked for at that time. He requested more, and the Government forwarded the divisions of Franklin and McCall, and others, until he had received 156,000 men; and there was but 19,022 left behind, for the defence of Washington. The Government which has been so roundly villified for not having sent him more, could not spare another soldier, for the divisions of McDowell and Banks were the necessary stays against the enemy at Fredericksburg and Warrenton, and there was no surplus in commission. The Young Napoleon might, however, have had them all, had he remained at Washington, and moved with them upon Richmond from that point; for he would thus have been enabled to cover the Capital and the valley of the Shenandoah at the same time, and to have kept the odds, too, on his own side.

But he preferred a more profound and complicated policy, and the result of it was, that the enemy caught him right in the midst of his brilliant strategy, and drove him pell-mell out of it, so that he burned his tents and stores, and fled for a week, leaving his guns in large numbers, and his wounded and his dead behind him. Instead of driving the enemy to the wall, they ran *him* into the mud, and brought him to a terrible standstill for months. The main results, therefore, of his brilliant strategy are, that he has cost the country about five hundred millions of dollars, prolonged the war at least a year, reduced his army practically to 70,000 men, and in addition to paralyzing it for months, as he once before paralyzed the grand army of the Potomac, he has actually water-logged the navy also, for he has "tied up" several hundred vessels (transports and men-of-war), in the simple duty of feeding and protecting him. The minor results of his genius are, the dejection of the country, a deluge of shinplasters, the sneers of Europe, the hisses

of Oxford, the invigoration of the rebel cause in Parliament, and the confident side whisper of old Palmerston to his rampant Commons, that a few weeks longer will bring a still better chance for intervention. Well might the French Princes and Beau Astor leave him in disgust, and well might he send forth his military orators to notify the People, that his acts are sacred from analysis, and that he is a great general, *for they know it.*

Now, we have arrived just at the point of this article where we wish to state, that we believe he is neither a great general nor a clever man; and to further express our conviction, that he is entirely unfitted, by reason of mental inferiority, for any broader military task than the management of a brigade.

There are many ways of testing intellectual capacity, and we know of no case easier for this purpose, than McClellan's. He is a military adept, and he cannot plan; a soldier, and he cannot fight; a scholar, and he cannot write. There is not one of his despatches that will bear the analysis of a schoolboy; not one of his bulletins which is not bloated with bombast; not one of his statements that is not vague, foggy, or "purely unintelligible."

He first sprang into the public ring, at Rich Mountain, like an acrobat or a rope dancer. The battle of that name was really performed by Rosencranz; but though a simple operation, it was well conceived, and, notwithstanding McClellan was not present, it, by the laws of practice, accrues to his credit, as the senior officer.* Well do we bear in mind, the tenor of the telegram by which he announced this victory to the world; and we here put it as a point of inference, whether a man, who, after years of laborious scholarship, can be so grossly inexact in the deliberate use of words, can reasonably be expected to exhibit any mental method in planning a campaign; or, to develope accuracy, while arranging his battalions amid the perturbations and the heat of action?

"The success of to-day," says our Napoleon, "is all that I could desire. We captured six brass cannons, *of which ons* is rifled, all the enemys' camp equipage and transportation, even to *his* cups. The number of tents will, probably, reach two hundred, and more than sixty wagons. *Their* killed and wounded will amount to fully one hundred and fifty, with one hundred prisoners." * * * *Their* retreat is complete. * * I may say we have driven out some ten thousand men. * * * Then, after some further grandiloquent display, Napoleon closes with the following literary cross, between the styles of Mr. Merriman and Uriah Heap. "I hope the General-in-Chief will approve my operations."

"Does the razor hurt you, sir?" says the barber, when conscious of his lightest touch. "A little applause if you please, ladies and gentlemen!" imploringly looks Mr. Merriman, as he crosses his legs and throws out his fingers from his lips, after a clever summerset. There is but one step between the sublime and the ridiculous; so the public, not looking for a mountebank, and being struck with this strange style, picked little Mac up for a Napoleon!

Then came the proposition for a bloodless war—imagine the old Napoleon doing that!—next came the cruel exoneration of Gen. Stone, for his sacrifice and defamation of the heroic Baker, who was immolated to their united blunders at Ball's Bluff; next, Napoleon's *low*-toned reflection upon the misfortunes of a brother officer (who would have harvested his victory but for the creature Patterson), by pomposuly proclaiming "no more retreats, no more defeats, no more Bull Run affairs." Then followed his repeatedly pretended preparations for a battle, and his prescient

* By the same rule, however, he is fully responsible for the dreadful blunders and butchery of Ball's Bluff, for that, the first of his operations as Commander-in-Chief, was planned and ordered by himself.

declaration, that the closely impending conflict would be "short, sharp and bitter," though time has revealed that, while saying so, he did not mean to fight at all. During all this while, he went riding up and down the lines, assuring "the boys" that if they would "stick by him, he would stick by them," and occasionally telling them, in the imperial vein, to have no fear, for he would expose his sacred person, with them, in the dangers of the field.

We next find Young Napoleon at Yorktown, before the head of an army, with which Old Napoleon would have marched all over Secessia, and back again, in six months; but instead of taking the meager city by assault, and giving the North and East an opportunity to square accounts of glory with the West, his bloodless strategy was again put in play, and he distributed the shovel instead of drawing forth the sword. At length the confederates, having detained him long enough to secure the arrival of their reinforcements from the South, made, at their leisure, a masterly retreat, the details of which lasted through four decorous days. Nay, a single spontaneous rebel, with a solitary gun, which he fired on his own hook all night, after the confederates were gone, stayed the progress of our army for several hours more. Now mark what our Napoleon did. He did not throw up redoubts before that man—though under his Crimean affliction of mud upon the brain, he must have been sorely tempted to such course—but having ascertained that the enemy had indeed marched out, he immediately sent off a handful of despatches, stating in set terms, that he had *won a brilliant victory!* Yes, *victory* was the word! Nay, not satisfied with this, and though the enemy had burned all their refuse, and lost not a single wagon, the little Mars on the following morning sent off another flood of telegrams, announcing that our *victory*, at Yorktown, had proved to be even more *brilliant* than he had at first supposed. This gross misuse of language would seem to indicate either a conscious want of fighting prestige (did we say of courage?), or an ignorance of the true weight of words; but if neither this nor that, then he must have intended to foist a false idea on the public. But the climax of this grand absurdity was yet to come, and it did come, in the shape of another telegram, so miserable in its character, so measly with humility, that our cheek still tingles at our share of the loss, sustained through it, by general human nature.

"May I be permitted to allow my troops to inscribe YORKTOWN on their banners, as other generals have done?"

This is so pitiable, and, for a commander-in-chief, so deplorably mean-spirited, that we do not care to dwell upon the picture. It could hardly look worse if he had sent the same application to Jeff Davis, on the subject of the Chickahominy! But the confederate "Commander-in-Chief" had undoubtedly "approved of his opefations" in that quarter!

Next came the affair at Williamsburg, where the rear guard of the enemy, finding us pressing after them too closely, turned grandly back and gave us bitter battle. The fight lasted for some seven hours. Gen. McClellan according to his custom arrived upon the field after the strife was over, and having reined up near Hancock's brigade, was made cognizant of their brilliant closing charge. Ignoring, thereupon, all other features of the day, he sent off a dispatch in which he gave credit to that brigade alone. That credit was, doubtless, well deserved, but it had been earned by an incidental operation, lasting not over forty minutes, while the divisions of Hooker, and Keese, and Kearney, and the Excelsior Brigade of Sickles, had been breathing the red flame of battle for six or seven hours. The other reports, however, exhibited the gross injustice of this single compliment, and, at the end of several days, we find Napoleon reluctantly putting forth another bulletin, in which he says,

in substance, that *had he known*, when writing his first despatch, of the gallant services performed by such and such divisions and brigades, he would have done them justice at the time, and in degree as he should learn who else behaved with spirit, he would award *them* equal praise. Was ever any confession, that was extorted under threatened consequences, more abject and significant than this?

But there is a crowning absurdity and contradiction yet to come, as in the case of the Yorktown telegrams, only we regret to say, that the climax, in this case, is more serious than in the other, and hardly reconcileable with ordinary common sense. Two or three days after this latent recognition of a brave army's toils and sacrifices, General McClellan reviewed Hancock's brigade, and having expressed a few words of warm eulogium, he is reported to have said, "You saved our army from disgrace!" Was ever statement like this heard before from a commander, about his army? Who was it that, but for this small squad, would have betrayed us to disgrace? Was it the *corps d'armee* of the grim old Heintzelman? Was it Hooker's or Kearney's, or Sickles' gallant men? Or, was it any, or all of the regiments whose prowess he had recognized but two or three days before? We do not wish to press the matter, and we hope it is not true. If it be not, it should be denied, for it is too heavy a weight for even Ajax to carry with decorum, down the aisles of history.

The next despatch of our hero relates to the battle of Fair Oaks, where Casey's skeleton division was precariously posted on the far side of the river, and so far in front, as to invite the assault of some forty thousand men. This exposed handful of inexperienced troops, lately recruited from Pennsylvania and New York, of course recoiled, as did the veterans at Shiloh, under the stunning blow; nevertheless, and though hundreds of them strewed the field, they rallied, and bravely withstood the pressure of the superincumbent foe for full three hours, at the astounding cost, in killed and wounded, of one-third of their entire number. The Commander-in-Chief, according to the reports, did not arrive upon the field until the fight was fairly over. Then gathering the details, probably from fugitives, he dashed off a despatch which he ostentatiously dated "From the Field of Battle!" in which he virtually denounced the whole division of the old veteran, as cowards. Lo, in about ten days afterward, he was obliged to swallow one-half this despatch, as he did that of Williamsburg, and to acknowledge that he, the Commander-in-Chief, who dated his despatch so blushingly "from the field of battle," had been *misinformed* about the matter. The other half, however, still rankles in the hearts of many a man and woman in the Empire and the Quaker States, whose sons and kinsmen drenched that cruel field in expiation of the fatal strategy of Young Napoleon. The shabby recompense was perforce accepted, but not a citizen of either State, whose stranded youth have been thus fearfully defamed in death, can lightly pass it from the mind. And it is because of this wrong, that we can now say to the anonymous wretches who have flooded us with obscene and insolent epistles about these articles, that we personally feel we owe no more undue and criminal forbearance to McClellan's blunders.

But he was not yet done with despatches, even in relation to this battle; for in the face of the fact that the enemy had driven him from his camp with the loss of many guns, and that they had slept upon the very battle ground, our Young Napoleon announced from his waist-deep location in the marsh, that he had gained a decided advantage over them, and secured a better position than before. Subsequent events have shown, however, that if the position to which he

was thus ingloriously pushed was better, the former must have been hell itself. This is certainly a fair conclusion, for in a few days afterward, he was driven from the last, at a cost of 15,000 men and about thirty cannon; while nothing but the strange valor of our soldiers, and the talent of their able marshals, combining with the fortunate drunkenness of certain Confederate Generals, saved our whole force from absolute destruction. The latter series of actions which effected this result, opened at 3 o'clock on the morning of the 26th June, but McClellan did not make his appearance on the field until some four or five hours afterwards. The fight thus opened, lasted seven days, but though we have read all the printed letters within our reach, about the matter, we fail to find more than one mention of Napoleon, during the prolonged *melee*, and that mention spoke of him and his staff as riding briskly to the rear, while whole columns were sweeping the other way to the attack. A strange epilogue to the "stick by me and I'll stick by you" orations!

Yes, at the close of affairs, we get another glimpse of him, but then he had made port, and was high up in the rigging of the *Galena*, with a spy-glass in his hand, surveying the turmoil on the shore. He may have been in the center of every hot encounter, dealing death upon the rebels with his own good sword, but we have failed to hear of it; and it has not been our good fortune to find a single tribute from any mercurial reporter, describing the modern Napoleon's coolness when some ball fell near him, or noticing the pleasing smile which overspread his face, when the dirt thrown up by some adjacent shell, consecrated him with the real baptism of battle. These reports are so usual in campaigns, that it is singular they should be omitted in this case, and the conclusion therefore is, either that the reporters were exceedingly remiss, or that no such scenes of signal hardihood occurred.

The first despatch which our young Commander wrote in relation to this week of battles, was, as the London *Times* has said about his plans, "purely unintelligible." By dint of study, however, and acute translation, we gather from it, the general idea, that he has outmanaged the enemy, though by these repeated successes it seems he has been terribly reduced, and forced again to relinquish the musket for the spade, and find shelter between his gunboats and redoubts.

The despatch which announced this *fiasco* to the world, again claimed an improvement of position, and with the deliberate intention of imposing on the country, Napoleon announced that he had lost but one siege gun. The *disquers* took this as a cue for their hosannahs, and encouraged by this unexpected demonstration, our hero sent off a semi-official letter, stating that the enemy had *retreated*. It was probably true that but one "siege" gun had been lost, but we were entitled to know how many guns of other calibre and fashion were lost with it. It was not true, in any point of view, however, that the enemy had *retreated*, for McClellan knew perfectly well, that they, having driven him to a cowering shelter under the protection of his men-of-war, had merely fallen back to a position consistent with their base of operations.

We have thus traced our Young Napoleon throughout the operations of this war, and while we find that nine-tenths of the hopes of the nation were centered on his genius, he proves to be the only chieftain who has brought disaster and disgrace upon the country. Look at him from what point of view we will, he is certainly the most extraordinary General who ever figured on the page of history. He is either a genius or he is nothing, for he follows none of the ordinary theories, and does everything by inversion. He does not believe at all in the policy of attack; he sees no moral loss or disadvantage in enduring siege from inferior numbers; and, with

a principle of strategy, not very well established, prefers to fight against heavy odds, to having them. The President required him to move upon Manassas, but he obeyed against his will, and every battle in the Peninsula has been forced upon him by the enemy. When he arrived before Yorktown, with his 120,000 men, there were but 8,000 Confederate troops within its walls, and had he then instituted an assault, and moved thenceforward promptly upon Richmond, he might have escaped the disastrous results which were the tough rewards of his week of *victory*. It cannot be denied that, but for the gun-boats which now cover him with their tremendous engines, his army, which was to "drive the enemy to the wall," would be taken "stock and fluke," and he, perhaps, be figuring in a pen in Richmond. And let us say, that we believe this the only way in which he will ever get to Richmond, from his present *superior* position, unless, by the providence of God, some man more able than himself, shall make a diversion upon the rebel capital, that will enable him to co-operate; or, unless, he crawl out of the Peninsula on his transports, back to the true base of operations before Washington.

But he should not be entrusted again with a superior command. His policy is too inexplicable, and he has cost us enough already. The little mud fort which he built for his friend, Pierre Toutant Beauregard, and the place assigned him in the Lone-Star movement, behind his associates Sidney Johnson, J. K. Duncan, Mansfield Lovell and Gustavus Smith, give the full measure of his value. Nay, if we are to take the word of his admirers, he has furnished it himself; for, conscious of his own defects, he humbly asked the President to be deposed from his high place—and asked it virtually in favor of a man who started in the race for eminence behind him. Alas, for human glory, and particularly for that kind of glory which could not keep its seat, with seven hundred thousand bayonets and a Nation at its back.

And this is the chieftain who we are told is a "great genius," "a second Napoleon," "a glorious, gallant and unconquerable leader," and who we are forbidden to discuss, on pain of General Sickles' suspicion and displeasure. But, to use a common phrase, this system of dragooning is "played out," the wand of Little Mac is broken, and the public, which furnishes the men and foots the bill, is thinking for itself. We can therefore inform Gen. Sickles, with all the modesty becoming a civilian, that the People of the city of New York, in particular, have of late been very busy in forming opinions in this matter, and we can assure him, also, that many of the best democrats among us, believe, that if this "gifted" chieftain had died a year ago, the war would have been over, and this country again happy and united.

And they have much cause for this belief, for they saw McClellan unaccountably restrain the chafing army of the Potomac for eight months; and they now behold him outdoing his earlier strategy, by paralyzing the navy also, and, with urgent cries of help, not only weakening the maritime resources of Mobile and New Orleans, but virtually raising the blockade of Charleston harbor. May Heaven protect us from such geniuses! The public at large, though it may not be able to manage an army, can reason on causes and results; and New York, which has been so lavish of its means and men, has a full vote in desiring to be relieved of a leader who is so unlucky. Generals are usually court-martialed for such reverses as have happened to McClellan, and there are instances in history, where unlucky leaders have had the additional misfortune to be shot. General Sickles may rest assured that he cannot resurrect his idol by mere epithets and spells of prestige; nor can Young Napoleon himself regain his ground even by the most gra-

clous devotion of his talents to the duties of the hospital. His army will *not revolt*, as has been threatened, even if he be removed; for they, like the clearer-sighted public, must, by this time, be willing to try if a new leader may not bring, at least, a change of fortune.

We would, therefore, respectfully suggest to our friend, General Sickles, that he had better fire his blank cartridges of laudation without impugning the intentions and motives of his equals; and would advise, that if he be really anxious to recruit his regiments, he offer pledges to our shrinking citizens that, if they will but enlist, they shall not be consigned to the fatal leadership of the Cæsar of the Chickahominy.

Finally, if General Sickles would still defend the genius of his patron, he will perhaps favor us with a little light upon one lingering question. The Public, without being too importunate, would like exceedingly to know, why our noble army was allowed so long to canker in the camps of the Potomac, while the rebel flag, in presence of the Capitol, flouted the manhood and prestige of the nation? *It cannot be that the rising Captain bound himself to the unknown interest which put him forward for the dizzy eminence of chief command to pursue a prescribed policy, should he be appointed!* for his pride and loyalty would have discarded such prescription, as soon as he found it working adversely for the country. He must have had other reasons; and what those reasons were, and why, with his superabundant troops, which were equally seasoned with the enemy's, he did not "push" the ragged, feeble and retiring rebels *of Manassas* "to the wall," should no longer be a mystery.

At this late date, General McClellan, who has received so many favors from the country, will probably have not the least objection to disclose. He can communicate his answer without hesitation, and confidentially, if he desire, for we will tell nobody but the public, and we are all friends here. G. W.

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